

FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

R6-80

Newburyport

WNB.5

Town/City: West Newbury

Place:

Photograph



View looking northwest.

Address: 26 Brickett Street

Historic Name: James and Susannah Brickett House

Uses: Present: Single Family Residence

Original: Single Family Residence

Date of Construction: possibly ca. 1730

Source: marriage date; deeds

Style/Form: Colonial

Architect/Builder: James Brickett, possibly

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone, uncut

Wall/Trim: Wood Clapboards / Wood Trim

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Garage (1980); shed (1980 per assessor [not easily visible])

Major Alterations *(with dates)*: Porch located at intersection of main block and southeast ell removed after 1973.

Condition: Excellent

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 4.5 acres

Setting: Located on a wooded rural road, the house abuts wetlands to the south, west, and north. An 18th-century residence and Christmas tree farm atop a rise abut the lot to the east. The Upper Artichoke Reservoir is located immediately north of the lot.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Stacy Spies

Organization: West Newbury Historical Commission

Date: June 2018

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

WEST NEWBURY

26 BRICKETT ST

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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☒ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

26 Brickett Street is set back from the street on an irregularly shaped lot. The house is located in a wooded area surrounded by wetlands, open fields and the Upper Artichoke Reservoir to the north. The 2 ½ -story house is oriented to face southwest, generally perpendicular to Brickett Street. Ells extend from the southeast, northwest, and northeast elevations. A gravel drive leads from Brickett Street toward the façade and leads to a frame garage.

The house has a side-gabled roof with close eaves and rests on an exposed timber sill atop a fieldstone foundation. A large parged masonry chimney rises from the center of the ridge. The 2 ½ -story main block measures 30'x36' and is five bays wide and one bay deep. The entrance is centered on the southwest elevation and is sheltered by a shallow front-gabled vestibule with close eaves. The doorway is flanked by slender wood pilasters with caps and plinths below a plain entablature and projecting drip cap. Narrow half-height sidelights fill the space between the corner posts and the pilasters. The house is clad with unpainted wood clapboards with cornerboards. The 6/6 wood sash windows have flat surrounds and are of similar size throughout the house. The second-story windows are located snug to the plate.

The 1½-story southeast ell measures approximately 18'x18.' The main (southwest) elevation contains a door adjacent to the northwest post and two windows. The ell's banked stone basement is accessed via a vertical board, side-hung door at the southeast elevation. The southeast elevation contains two bays at the first story and half-story. The one-story northwest ell measures approximately 15' x 15' and contains two bays on its southwest elevation. A wood deck is located at the north corner of the house and northwest ell. A one-story ell is attached to the northeast (rear) elevation.

Well-maintained and well-preserved, 26 Brickett Street is an excellent example of 18th century architecture in West Newbury. The center chimney, vestibule, visible timber frame construction and wood sash windows are notable features.

Interior inspections were beyond the scope of this survey, but a closer examination of surviving framing, floorplans, and interior features and finishes by an architectural historian with expertise in early Massachusetts building technology could provide additional insights into a likely original construction date and on the physical evolution of the building over time.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

26 Brickett Street was the home of several generations of the Brickett family during the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries. The house may have been constructed by carpenter James Brickett, Junior (1711-1770)¹ around the time of his marriage to Susannah Pillsbury in 1729. (The house does not appear on the 1729 map.) The couple had two sons, Nathaniel and James. James Brickett, Senior, owned a house nearby on the west side of present-day Moulton Street, near the Byfield line. In 1765, James Brickett, Junior sold two parcels of land totaling ten acres to his son, Nathaniel (1731-1805),² noted as a yeoman in the deed.³ These two parcels mention a "way," or road, which may refer to present-day Brickett Street.

¹ Findagrave.com Memorial #147987382. Massachusetts Probate 3270.

² Findagrave.com Memorial # 99561892.

³ Essex Deed Book 119, page 23 and Essex Deed Book 119, page 24.

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Nathaniel Brickett and his wife, Anna, had two sons, Nathaniel and Amos Brickett (1769-1851).⁴ Nathaniel and Anna sold their "homestead" and other land to Amos in 1804. These two parcels totaled 52 acres.⁵ In these two deeds, Nathaniel Brickett is noted as "gentleman" and Amos Brickett as "yeoman." Also in 1804, for five dollars, Amos purchased his father's livestock, carpentry tools, husbandry tools, ox sled and plows, as well as other tools.⁶ Another agreement in 1804 defines the manner in which Nathaniel would transfer the property to Amos and occupy the lower two rooms of the house. The document lays out in great detail how Amos would care for his parents, including provision of a carriage and horse, sharing of farm production, provision of a nurse or housekeeper should his parents be in need of assistance, and even a list of items that Amos would be responsible to purchase at their request, including coffee, chocolate, lard, and candles.⁷ Nathaniel Brickett died nine years later in 1813.

Amos Brickett married Abigail Thurlow (1772-1860) in 1793. Farmer Amos Brickett became a church deacon and also did work for the town. For example, in 1811, Amos Brickett was paid for his work to "plow the ways" and for "labor and materials expended on the school house near Jacob Burrill's."⁸

Amos and Abigail Brickett had a son, Moody Brickett (1794-1888), who was married to Elizabeth Titcomb (1792-1879) around 1815.⁹ Moody Brickett worked as a farmer and, it appears, owned the property with his father, although he also appears to have owned property on Main Street. "M. Brickett" appears on the 1830 map at this location. In the 1850 census agricultural schedule, Amos Brickett reported owning 71 acres of improved land and five acres of unimproved land. In 1851, the West Newbury tax assessor's records indicate that Amos and Moody Brickett split their holdings evenly; the two shared a house, barn, and shop, two carriages and one horse.¹⁰ After his father's death, Moody Brickett continued to live at 26 Brickett Street with his wife and children Sarah, Henry M., and his mother, Abigail.

In 1916, Moody and Elizabeth Brickett's son, Henry Moody Brickett, sold the property. The property changed hands several times from 1916 to 1919.¹¹ In 1919, Albert Elwell and his wife, Edith, purchased "The Homestead," as it was called in the deed, and 55 acres of land.¹² Albert farmed the land,¹³ as did sons Albert and Arthur, who owned houses nearby.¹⁴ Albert Elwell sold the property to his son, Arthur, and Arthur's wife, Mildred, in 1950.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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⁴ Findagrave.com Memorial # 57877738.

⁵ Essex Deed Book 173, page 194.

⁶ Essex Deed Book 176, page 20.

⁷ Essex Deed Book 173, page 258.

⁸ Town of Newbury Records. Ancestry.com. Accessed April 15, 2018.

⁹ Findagrave.com Memorial # 141295260.

¹⁰ *An invoice and valuation of the rateable polls and estates, within the town of West Newbury, taken by the assessors on the first day of May, 1851 and 1852*. West Newbury: Indian Hill Press, 1852. <https://archive.org/details/invoicevaluation00west>. Accessed April 15, 2018.

¹¹ Essex Deed Book 2319, page 488; Essex Deed Book 2358, page 372; Essex Deed Book 2360, page 78.

¹² Essex Deed Book 2438, page 149.

¹³ West Newbury City Directory, 1925.

¹⁴ United States Census, 1930, 1940.

National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

☒ Individually eligible ☐ **only** in a historic district☐ Contributing to a potential historic district ☐ Potential historic districtCriteria: ☒ **A** ☐ **B** ☒ **C** ☐ **D**Criteria Considerations: ☐ **A** ☐ **B** ☐ **C** ☐ **D** ☐ **E** ☐ **F** ☐ **G**Statement of Significance by Stacy Spies*The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.*

The James and Susannah Brickett House is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the early settlement of West Newbury. Into the last quarter of the 17th century, present-day West Newbury was known as the "Upper Commons" or "Upper Woods" of Newbury, and was to be held perpetually in common for all residents of Newbury. However, a "road to Bradford" was in use by the 1650s and houses began to be constructed near the road in this common area. Pressures mounted to open the upper commons to development and in 1686, the town voted that each freeholder would be allotted a 20-acre lot between the Artichoke River and the Merrimack River by the Bradford (Groveland) line. By the end of the 17th century, approximately 300 people lived within the bounds of present-day West Newbury.

The James and Susannah Brickett House is also eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion C as an excellent example of Colonial-period architecture in Essex County. Dwellings constructed during the early 18th century in West Newbury are of the central chimney type with symmetrical fenestration and side-gabled roof.

The building retains integrity of location, design, feeling, materials, setting, association, and workmanship.